

SOME FEW
OBSERVATIONS
ON

The present Publication of the

S P E E C H

OF

A Right Honourable Gentleman,

AGAINST THE

EXPULSION of Mr. WILKES,

On the 3d of February, 1769.

In a Letter to a Friend in Buckinghamshire.

L O N D O N :

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W E E M O S

OBSEVATIONS

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The present publication of the

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LETTER

THE JOURNAL OF THE

On the 3d of February 1850.

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S I R,

I CANNOT forbear troubling you with some Remarks which obviously occur on the Publication of a Speech of a Right Honourable Gentleman, the Printer of which has presumed to offer an Affront to the meanest Understanding by saying, that it is published without the *Consent, Approbation, or Knowledge* of the Right

Hon. Gentleman; tho' he inserted several previous Advertisements in the Public Papers declaratory of his Intention to publish it, and several Paragraphs of the highest Encomiums of the Excellence of the Composition also appeared in the Public Papers: It is therefore to be taken for granted, without other Suppositions, as there was Time sufficient to have suppressed its Publication, had there been the *least real Desire* of doing it, that it is published with the Privy and probably with the *Assent* of the
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Right Hon. Gentleman ; and that his Motive for allowing of it at present is, that his Reputation as a Statesman might not be confined within the Walls of the House of Commons, but that he may be represented to all the People without Doors, and be *beld forth*, as the most highly qualified for the first Offices of the State (some of which it is imagined that he has long wished to have resumed) not only on Account of this excellent Performance, but also on Account of his Integrity of giving
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his Voice against the Expulsion of Mr. *Wilkes* on the 3d of *February*, 1769, from his most serious Deliberation, and from the noble Office of speaking the Truth and doing impartial Justice, which are well known to have always alone swayed all his Actions; and not from any Change of Sentiments in regard to Mr. *Wilkes* or from factious Opposition, but merely from Conviction of Opinion, and from conciliating Motives. This Gentleman is of late become of a very conciliating Disposition, and I believe

lieve much wishes, that Matters
 may be so conciliated, that he may
 again be admitted into Office ;
 and seems to have been very apprehensive at the Time of his delivering his Sentiments on the important Question, that he should be misrepresented without Doors, on Account of the Part he should take as to his Decision ; but from whence that Consciousness arose is best known to himself, and most probably he has flattered himself, that the Publication of his Speech would tend to obviate any Prejudices

dices that might be conceived to the Disadvantage of his Character and Conduct, and that the Public would understand, that he meant only to prevent a Precedent which might hereafter be made to affect an *Honest* Man ; and not to give the least personal Countenance to Mr. *Wilkes* ; but the Event of the Publication will shew whether the Public will be inclined to enter into supposed Distinctions, and acquit the Right Hon. Gentleman of Inconsistency and Impropriety.

It

It is not my Intention to enter into the large Field of discussing a Question of such Importance as gave Occasion to this Speech. In regard to this Question there have been already many able Publications, and from *that*, which is now preparing in the Press, much real Matter of Information on this interesting Subject is to be expected, if the Insinuations to the Public, as to the Author, are authentic. I mean to confine myself only to that Part of the Right Honourable Gentleman's Speech, wherein

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he condemns the Conduct of Administration in regard to Mr. *Wilkes*, and to make some few Observations, which naturally result from the Part which that Gentleman has taken at different Times in respect to Mr. *Wilkes*.

In Justice to the Abilities of the Author of this Speech it will, I imagine, be admitted by many, that his Reasonings and Conclusions in many Instances carry Conviction with them ; and therefore it is much to be lamented, that more Consistency of Conduct had
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not been joined to such Abilities ;
 the Want of which most uncontro-
 vertedly appears by his admitting,
 that as *Mr. Wilkes was become an*
Object of popular Favour, and that
the public Discontent was founded
in Truth and Reason ; and when the
Sky lowers, and hangs heavy all
around us, a Storm may then arise
that may tear up the Constitution
by the Roots, and even shake the
Palace of the King, (an Insinua-
tion, which a good Subject ought
to have been ashamed to have
thrown out, calculated only to

give such Alarm, as was not to be dreaded from the Clamours of the Populace, and done with a View to represent himself, as the *only Person*, by whose Means a Deliverance from so great a Calamity was to be expected) and therefore recommends *it as more advisable to conciliate the heated Minds of Men by Temper and Discretion than by adding fresh Fuel to Discontent.* And yet this Gentleman has thrown out severe Invectives against the present Administration for not immediately

mediately proceeding against Mr. *Wilkes* on his Return, and for afterwards prosecuting him in the Manner they have done. Tho' it has been greatly lamented, that a Pardon was not granted to Mr. *Wilkes* at the Time he so anxiously sued for it, as it would have been the Means of preventing all those truly disagreeable Consequences which have since happened.

Supposing that the Conduct of Administration has been deserving of Censure, can this Gentleman flatter himself, that his Conduct

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stands unimpeached as to the Impropriety of having *originally commenced* the most virulent Prosecution and Persecution of and against Mr. *Wilkes* in the Manner He did, who has been the Stalking-horse to so many Persons Power and Emoluments? For Mr. *Wilkes* was then an Object of popular Favour, (tho' he is since become more so) and it was by that Means that his Commitment under a General Warrant made so much Noise; *for* it was generally, and it must in particular be known to the Right Honour-

nourable Gentleman, who was then practising at the Bar in no very eminent Manner, that the late Duke of *Newcastle* compromised one, if not more Seizures, under a General Warrant. Though he has observed, that Dr. *Shebbeare* and his Papers were seized under a *General* Warrant, and that the Doctor *was prosecuted by Mr. Pratt, then Attorney-general, and now Lord High Chancellor*, it is to be hoped, that by the unnecessary Mention of the latter Circumstance, that he did not mean to convey a disingenuous

genuous Insinuation to the Public, as to Mr. *Wilkes's* Discharge in Consequence of his Application to the Court of Common Pleas, when Lord Chief Justice *Pratt* presided in it with so much Advantage to the Court, and so much Honour to himself, for I was in Court when Mr. *Wilkes's* Motion was made, and, if I mistake not, he was discharged, not on Account of *the Warrant*, under which he was apprehended, but because the Court were of Opinion, that Privilege, as to a Member of Parlia-

liament, held in *all* Cases except *Treason, Felony, and Breach* of the Peace. If this Right Honourable Gentleman had not by his Conduct afterwards *roasted* Mr. *Wilkes*, as *the Whigs* did Dr. *Sachaverell*, he had not burnt himself, or raised a Flame, which he is now so desirous to extinguish ; and if he had left Mr. *Wilkes* also to have been prosecuted by the Attorney-general only, as Dr. *Shebbeare* was, the present Tumult would have been prevented, and there would have been no Occasion for those

conciliating Measures he now so calmly and so pathetically recommends to his Majesty's Servants. What Colour of Reason was there for the Right Honourable Gentleman to presume, that *if he had been intrusted with the executive Powers of the State when Mr. Wilkes returned Home, by not suffering Mr. Wilkes to remain out of Custody for twenty-four Hours,* he should have prevented these gloomy Clouds from gathering, which he has represented as so alarming? And what Occasion could

could he have had for that Conduct ; for surely he does not think that Step would have prevented the Electors for *Middlesex* from chusing him ; and he has given it as his Opinion, that *the most effectual Method of rendering Mr. Wilkes insignificant was to have suffered him to have taken his Seat in the House of Commons, because he has not Talents sufficient to make himself formidable within the Walls of the House of Commons : And that the People will think, if any material National Distress hap-*

pens, it is owing to his not being admitted to take his Seat.

Does not this Reasoning operate also against the original Expulsion during the Administration of the Right Hon. Gentleman? And, if it has been imprudent in the present Administration to carry Matters now with an *high* Hand against Mr. *Wilkes*, surely it was not prudent to have expelled him *at first*.

Notwithstanding the Right Honourable Gentleman has represented very justly the Insults offered to Majesty by Mr. *Wilkes* and his

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Adherents, as Crimes of a *Greater* Magnitude than libelling a Secretary of State, (as they certainly are) it is Matter of much Astonishment to me, that this Gentleman, (*when one of his Majesty's Servants,*) should have forgot the real Affront with which he then was supposed to have insulted Majesty, by pitifully refusing the trifling Sum of 5 or 6000 l. for the Purposes of a necessary Accommodation of the Royal Nursery. His Conduct can be but little palliated by supposing that a Sufficiency of Money had been

been granted out of the Civil List for that and other Purposes ; for, if his Majesty's other Servants had misapplied it, there was not a Shadow of Pretence for refusing what was so absolutely essential for the Accommodation of the Royal Infant Family. It is I believe not yet forgot what a Violence he offered to Royal Assurances in his Removal of the Brother of an unpopular Nobleman ; and it is well known, that he has often urged those Measures when in Opposition, which he would not
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admit of in Administration. And it is said, that this Right Hon. Gentleman, so zealous of maintaining all due Respect to Majesty, and of restraining all Licentiousness, and Want of Reverence to the Constitution, and so desirous of procuring the necessary Obedience to the Laws of his Country, and Respect to every Branch of Legislature ; I say it is reported, that this very truly loyal Gentleman suffers the Manuscript Letters of *Junius* to be regularly sent to him. Is he not therefore accessory to the most inflammatory

tory Compositions, and the most cruel Personalities that ever appeared ; as by their persuasive and captivating Language they are calculated to do the greatest Injury ? With what Consistency and Sincerity therefore can he pretend to hold Mr. *Wilkes* in such high Detestation ? Had *Junius's* Compositions been employed on the manly Subject of discussing political Subjects at large, and not confined to the low Business of pointing out and ridiculing the Errors of Persons in Administration only,

only, and their Friends ; of making forced Applications in regard to *Occurrences* which have no immediate Connections with Administration ; and of descending to Transactions of such a private and personal Nature, as to make even common Sense and common Humanity revolt at such Conduct, which has very justly excited deserved Indignation, they would indeed have charmed beyond Imagination ; for how persuasive must such elegant Language have been, if it had not been sullied by

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being prostituted to mercenary and illiberal Views? But as their Censure has been extended only to some particular Persons, it is evident that they are the Productions of one or more, who think it their Interest to defame the Characters in Administration, with the Hopes of producing, by these Means, a Revolution in Administration, and of attaining personal Advantages; but if, on the contrary, such Abilities had not been made subservient to such unworthy Purposes; with what real Admiration would they have

have been beheld ! What universal Applause would they have commanded ! and in what high and general Estimation would they have deservedly stood ?

The Right Hon. Gentleman has observed, that conciliating Measures have been often urged as to the Colonies ; and asks, why the Administration should be less disposed to such Measures in regard to Mr. *Wilkes* ? And I take the Liberty of reversing that Question by desiring to know, why he is so averse to conciliating Measures in respect

to the Colonies ? It is indeed somewhat singular that he should be the Cause in *Two* such remarkable Instances, where conciliating Measures are become indeed so very necessary ; but, as he is now so desirous of recommending them in the Case of Mr. *Wilkes*, it is to be hoped, that the Time will soon come, when he will, for the Good of his Country in general, be as desirous to shew the *same* Disposition to conciliating Measures in regard to the Colonies.

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It is referred to the dispassionate Consideration of the Public, whether their Fears would in the least be diminished, if at this alarming Crisis the Administration of these Kingdoms was again to be committed to the Right Honourable Gentleman, who has shewn such a Disposition to Inconsistency, Arrogance, and personal Disrespect to his Sovereign.

As an independent Freeholder of *Bucks*, I think I am intitled to take the Liberty of making a few Observations also
on

on the famous Petition of that County. In the first Place I desire to ask, whether at the Meeting for that Purpose there were more than eight or ten real Gentlemen present? And whether that little Company was not a small Junto of the particular Friends and Connections of the Earl T— and Earl V—, though I remember it was said at the Time of the last General Election, when Earl T— wished that his Brother would join Earl V—, that Mr. G. G. said, *He did not know who*

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Earl V— was ; but it now appears that he is since become well acquainted with his Lordship. And I would also ask, whether it was not said by Way of Apology for Mr. G. G. not being present at the Meeting, that it was apprehended, that the Effect of the Petition would be best promoted by his Absence. Unparalleled Arrogance as to his own personal Consequence surely ! It has been also reported, that this Meeting, besides the abovementioned small Junto of Gentlemen, did not consist of above

60 Persons, many of whom were supposed to have on Freeholds ; that they were with great Industry got together (much owing to the Activity of the ^{*}Revd. Agent of Mr. G. G.) and, as farther Proofs how very *respectable* this Meeting was, *a Shilling* a Head was paid by the Company all round ; it is easy to conjecture by whom the other Expences of the Day were paid. I appeal to Reason and to common Sense, whether it is not an insolent Mockery of Majesty, that a Petition

tion so circumstanced, and so destitute of the Support of the greatest Number of Persons of Property, Weight, and Understanding in the County, should be conveyed to the Throne as the free, genuine, and general Sense of the County of *Bucks*? The young Gentleman, who conceived so highly of his own imaginary Abilities by principally taking the Lead on that very memorable Occasion, and who has flattered himself, that by Means of his Composition, Eloquence, and Connections, he has created an

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Interest in the County, may possibly find himself as much deceived in his Conjectures, as he was in regard to his Pretension to a County in *Wales* some Time ago ; and that, when he may make another Trial of his Influence in the County of *Bucks*, he may find as great a Diminution of Interest, as he did of Applause, when he made a second Attempt to be witty in a certain august Assembly.

I cannot restrain myself from declaring, that I think the principal Object in the *Buckinghamshire*

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Petition, as well as of all the other Counties, praying a D— of P—t, is founded on factious, selfish, or mistaken Principles, and tending to affront and to distress Majesty. And tho' some Petitions bear very truly respectable Names, one in particular, and may therefore seem to give great Sanction and much Weight to the important Request from their Sovereign, and therefore to justify the Propriety of it in all the other Counties ; yet it is imagined that the Idea of its being necessary to cure the Irregularity, if

not Illegality, in Mr. *Wilkes's* Case, is not alone an Object of sufficient Magnitude as to justify, in these Times of Heat and Faction, the Inconveniencies that would arise from a General Election. In the first Place, I do not imagine there would be many *New* Members; and, consequently, it would be only *nominally* a new P——t. Some few marked and very ministerial Persons would be excluded; and some very popular ones would be admitted in their Room. Mr. *Wilkes* also, and probably some of his virtuous Adherents

herents too ; tho' I am apt to believe that by this Exchange of Men the P——t would receive no real Ornament, or the Nation derive any real Benefit from the Integrity or Abilities of these Patriotic Gentry. The Administration would be much pressed to support their Ministerial Influence ; and therefore Thousands, if not Millions, of the Public Money would be squandered away. Many old Members in Consequence of certain Conditions would be re-chosen ; and others, by the Expences

pences of a fresh Election would be rendered so desperate as to make their Necessity greater of becoming Ministerial Tools. Such, and such only, would be the Consequence after the sad Effects from the Ferment of a General Election at this Time. A *New* P—t would be formed indeed, but chiefly of the *same* Men; and therefore what Reason is there to suppose it would be really *more* virtuous than the present? And might not the Precedent of a *Good* King to get rid of a supposed bad

P——t

P——t be used by a *Bad* King to get rid of a *Good* P——t, by causing only some Counties and Boroughs to petition him to d—e his P——t. But, on the Contrary, it may be urged, that it is, at this Time, notwithstanding all the Inconveniencies that might result from it, absolutely necessary to remove the two Causes of popular Clamour, the Admission of Col. *Lutterel* into, and the Exclusion of Mr. *Wilkes* from the House of Commons. I most sincerely wish to see the public Clamour quieted, though

though not by such a Step. It is, I believe, the Admission of Col. *Lutterel* as Member for *Middlesex* that gives more general Disgust, than the Rejection of Mr. *Wilkes*. Tho' the former Measure has been justified by asserting, that the Power of Admission of a Candidate with the smallest Number of Votes is justifiable, after a *Declaration of Incapacity* of the Candidates with a Majority of Votes; and that Mr. *Wilkes's* Case was become very different from Mr. *Walpole's*. I am therefore led,

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contrary to my Intention, to say a Word or two to shew, that the Reason for not accepting Mr. *Taylor*, in Mr. *Walpole's* Case, ought to have operated against the Admission of Mr. *Lutterel*, though a Writ was issued out a *third* Time, in which Mr. *Wilkes's* Incapacity was inserted. And it has also been urged, that his Incapacity was not *created* but declared only by the Resolution of the House; and, if so, the Insertion of it in the Writ cannot surely be of any material real Effect, as to render

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the Conduct of the Electors more culpable for persevering to elect Mr. *Wilkes* ; for, if the Incapacity was implied, as being the Effect of his Expulsion, the Electors might be supposed to have known it as well at the second as at the third Election ; and, though the Insertion of his Incapacity in the Writ could not but be intended as a Warning, it was in Effect unnecessary ; and surely, as the Officer to whom this cautionary Insertion was principally directed, wholly disregarded it, how could it be supposed to operate more strongly as to the Electors,

tors, as having more wantonly and disrespectfully thrown their Votes away at the third, than the second Time, more especially as their Votes were not refused, but *accepted*; and, if Col. *Lutterel* ought to have been returned, why was not the *Sheriff* reprimanded for returning Mr. *Wilkes*, which would seemingly have lessened the Impropriety of receiving the Colonel. If the Insertion of Incapacity in the Writ was only explanatory of what was implied from the Effect of the Expulsion, there is no *real* Difference on Account of the *third* Election,

but leaves the Case in Effect *exactly similar* as to Col. *Lutterel* and Mr. *Taylor* ; and therefore the Colonel should, like Mr. *Taylor*, have *not* been accepted. There does indeed seem some Difference between Mr. *Walpole's* Case and Mr. *Wilkes's* ; for the former was expelled by the same P——t without any Reference to former Offences or Proceedings. As the Curing this Irregularity by a D——n of P——t cannot be done without producing greater Evils than are meant to be remedied, it is to be wished that Col. *Lutterel*, in the first Instance, (who

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certainly was disappointed of the Support he expected) was removed to his own original Seat, by the same Means that inabled him to offer himself as a Candidate for *Middlesex*; and, if it is not too late, that it should be stipulated with Mr. *Wilkes* (as the Right Hon. Gentleman says was done as to his Surrender) to relinquish his Pretensions to *Middlesex*, with which he has no Connection as to Property, (and for which in that Case there would not be wanting Candidates,) on Condition of being brought in for some other Place;
for

for I can easily conceive that no Gentleman of real Character and Fortune of the County will stand in Opposition to Mr. *Wilkes*, not only as doubting his Success, but as fearful of suffering the same cruel personal Attacks as a former Member and late Candidate *did*, because he was, poor Man, no wiser than many other Men. The Confusion in *Middlesex*, and, indeed, all over the Nation, would, by this Means, be ended, Mr. *Wilkes*'s Friends would see him seated in P—t, and would try whether they would reap those Advantages which they expect

pect from his Talents ; and as the Right Hon. Gentleman has said they are not to be thought *formidable* within the Walls of the House of Commons, the Administration therefore need not be under any Apprehensions at his coming there. It is, indeed, high Time that there was an End of all *internal* Feuds and Discords ; that the Dignity of the Nation, both at Home and Abroad, was truly restored ; that the King's Ministers were more deserving of the Confidence of the People ; and that due Respect and proper Reverence

was

was shewn to Majesty; for the present Condition of this Country, both in Regard to the unhappy State of its own distant Connections, besides the general Situation of *Europe*, demands the utmost Attention which the ablest Minister can give at a Time so truly critical and alarming. Every one who has a true Regard for the Honour, Dignity, and Prosperity of his Country, must be unhappy, among many other Reasons, to think, that this Nation *dares* not demand Payment of the *Manilla* Ransom, and that the Minister should avow, it
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would distress Government; and that this Nation also should have been even insulted, in Treaties of Commerce, by the insignificant and ungrateful King of Portugal.

The Honour of this Nation is very much degraded, and the cordially endeavouring to retrieve it would be Time much *better employed* than in attending to supposed Grievances and Apprehensions at Home; and it is indeed much to be lamented, that not only *whole Sessions, but even Years,*

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are to be intirely ingrossed in prosecuting, expelling, and proceeding against one single Man, and attending to the Circumstances that arise from his single Case, as Faction or Interest may occasion; to the shameful Neglect of every National Object of Consequence, both at Home and Abroad; and there is great Reason to apprehend, that no material Advantage would be obtained by a mere Dissolution of P——t, or Admission of *other* Men into Office; unless there was a
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thorough Change in the Temper
of the People, and in the Dispo-
sition of those at the Head of Go-
vernment, and which can only be
the reciprocal Effect of each other.

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thorough Change in the Temper
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vernment, and which can only be
the reciprocal Effect of each other.

ERRATA.

Page 8, line 12, *after* into read *such*
16, line 13, *after* apprehended read
and committed,

Page 23, line 10, *after* of read *the*
32, line 2, *for* on read *no*

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